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# **Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security**

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**EVIDENCE**

**Tuesday, December 3, 2013**

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**Chair**

**Mr. Daryl Kramp**



## Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security

Tuesday, December 3, 2013

•(1135)

[English]

**The Chair (Mr. Daryl Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings, CPC)):** I call the meeting to order.

Colleagues, thank you very much for your attendance here today.

Welcome to our distinguished guests. Let us first apologize for the brief interruption for votes, but as everybody here well realizes, this is something that does not always consistently control our time.

This is meeting number eight of the public safety and national security committee, and today's meeting is and will be televised, as agreed upon by all parties. We all should recognize that this meeting is dedicated to supplementary estimates (B), 2013-14.

Appearing before the committee today, we have the minister for the first hour, and in this particular case it was 11 until 12, so it will be up to the minister himself to decide whether or not he can stay after 12 o'clock, depending on what his commitments are. That latitude will remain with the minister.

So for the first hour we have the Honourable Steven Blaney, Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness. As well, of course, we have a number of respected senior officials here with us today, and we're delighted to have you all here for the examination of the supplementary estimates.

From the Department of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, we have Deputy Minister François Guimond. From the Canada Border Services Agency, we have the president, Luc Portelance. From the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, we have Commissioner Bob Paulson; and from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Public Complaints Commission, we have Ian McPhail, interim chair. From Correctional Service Canada, we have Anne Kelly, senior deputy commissioner; and from the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, we have Jeff Yaworski, deputy director.

Welcome to all of our guests, and thank you very kindly for coming to this meeting here today.

The prompter says we are in camera, but of course we are not in camera. I just reference that for any of my colleagues who had a concern.

Now, without delay, we welcome the opening comment from the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness.

[Translation]

**Hon. Steven Blaney (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness):** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Dear colleagues, it is an honour to be here today. This is the first time I've appeared before the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security as the minister responsible for the portfolio.

I would first like to welcome the new members who, like me, are joining the committee.

Mr. Chair, thank you for running this committee, which does important work. Thank you for your work within the committee on very important matters. This is the first time I am attending a committee with such a wide table.

I belong to a department that will soon celebrate 10 years. It was created following the events in September 2001. My department comprises all the security agencies that work to protect Canadians.

I am accompanied by François Guimont, the deputy minister, Luc Portelance, from the Canada Border Services Agency, Mrs. Kelly, from the Correctional Service of Canada, and Mr. Paulson, RCMP commissioner, who spoke on the weekend about ensuring that Canadian information remains Canadian. I am also accompanied by Mr. Yaworski, from the Canadian Security Intelligence Service. They have worked together on this, and I would like to congratulate them. We also have Ian McPhail, who plays an important role with the Commission for Public Complaints Against the RCMP.

The purpose of my appearance here this morning is to seek your unanimous support for supplementary estimates (B) 2013-14.

[English]

There's a main item I will be seeking funding for, but I would like to lay out some of the more specific expenses that relate to the people accompanying me, which total \$816.5 million.

There is a net \$82.9 million for the Canada Border Services Agency, which is represented by Mr. Portelance here today, and that includes funding to fulfill commitments under the Beyond the Border action plan. The plan was agreed to between President Obama and the Prime Minister in 2011. Implementing it is a priority for the government. Projects to be funded through these estimates include developing a new shared entry-exit program to strengthen the integrity of Canada's border and immigration programs; implementing the interactive advance passenger information initiative to screen international air travellers prior to their departure for Canada; continuing work to implement pilot projects for the integrated cargo security initiative; and enhancing the trusted trader and trusted traveller programs, better known as the NEXUS program.

These programs will build on our government's strong record of protecting our borders. Since 2006, we have increased the number of front-line border officers by 26% and we have removed more than 115,000 illegal immigrants.

• (1140)

[Translation]

The supplementary estimates (B) also includes a net increase of \$31.4 million for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. That includes \$7 million for injured officers and transfers from other departments to fund RCMP services, including first nations policing.

As for the Correctional Service of Canada, a net amount of \$4.7 million is intended in large part to cover salary increases for front-line correctional officers.

[English]

For the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, an increase net of \$4 million is needed, mostly to recover costs related to existing program expenditures.

Finally, a net increase of \$4.7 million is needed for the Commission for Public Complaints Against the RCMP, part of which will help fund new elements of the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP.

[Translation]

Peripheral spending totals \$127 million of the total \$816 million requested in the supplementary estimates (B).

I would now like to talk to you about the heart of today's budget request, which is \$688.9 million, or 84% of the net total of the increase requested in these supplementary estimates.

[English]

This past June, historic floods hit southern Alberta, an event that the Insurance Bureau of Canada identifies as the most expensive natural disaster in Canadian history. These estimates seek \$689 million for the disaster financial assistance arrangement, known as DFA, a cost-sharing program that helps provinces and territories cover exceptional costs of natural disasters that they cannot be reasonably be expected to pay for themselves.

The breakdown of these costs goes like this: \$100 million would go towards the 2011 flooding in Manitoba; \$75 million would go for the flooding in Saskatchewan in 2011; and \$5 million would go for the 2012 flooding in New Brunswick. We also had flooding in Alberta, where the amount of \$9 million is planned; and \$500 million will go towards advance payments to Alberta for the 2013 floods.

In light of these exceptional costs, our government has committed to set aside up to \$2.8 billion in funds to provide assistance to the Province of Alberta over the coming year. So 84% of the request this morning is related to natural disasters; of this, \$500 million is for the advance payments in Alberta.

• (1145)

[Translation]

Unfortunately, that's not all. The government also acted quickly to rectify the situation in Lac-Mégantic, Quebec. Although man-made

disasters do not usually fall within the scope of our natural disaster plans, which do not apply to human-induced events, the government agreed to contribute \$60 million to support recovery and reconstruction in Lac-Mégantic. On November 21, 2013, Prime Minister Harper announced an additional \$95 million in support for decontamination, an amount that will be included in future supplementary estimates.

[English]

These estimates also seek approval to transfer \$25 million from Public Safety Canada to the RCMP to pay for the federal share of policing costs for RCMP services in some first nations and Inuit communities across Canada. In March our government reaffirmed our commitment to the first nations policing program. My predecessor, Minister Toews, announced the five-year renewal of the program, along with \$612.4 million over five years. And we continue to work with provinces, territories, and first nations and Inuit communities to sign multi-year agreements under the FNPP, the first nations policing program, which helps ensure professional, dedicated, and responsive policing services in approximately 400 first nations and Inuit communities in Canada.

In a nutshell, you can see from these supplementary estimates that our government's public safety priorities are clear. We are focusing on securing our borders, namely with the Beyond the Border initiative, ensuring our correctional system actually corrects criminal behaviour, and we are supporting and standing up for communities in their time of need following a disaster.

As you can see this morning, the supplementary estimates are quite clear. As I've mentioned, 84% is related to natural disasters in part of the DFA program; the other part is, as described, the adjustment to the different agencies, with one same goal: to increase the safety of Canadians.

With that in mind, Mr. Chair, I'd be more than open to answering questions the members may have.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, honourable Minister. We will go ahead with our round of questioning, and hopefully we'll have time for the minister to at least do a round with everybody in the first round—we're hoping, but we'll play it by ear.

First off, we'll start with Mrs. James, parliamentary secretary, please, for seven minutes.

**Ms. Roxanne James (Scarborough Centre, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Welcome to the committee, Minister Blaney, and all of the other guests as well. It's nice to see you. Most of you I've met before.

I'm going to start, Minister Blaney, with some questions regarding our prison population. There's been quite a lot of attention paid to the issue of population growth in our prisons. The issue of double bunking has come up time and time again. If I'm not mistaken, some people out there, groups, or even opposition parties, thought the prison population would actually increase by 300% and 400%. In fact, I don't think that's correct.

I'm wondering if you could give us your comments on that. We've even heard that our government, because of our tough on crime legislation, would end up having to build these billion-dollar prisons to accommodate all the prisoners we're going to throw in jail.

Have those estimates actually materialized? Have we built new prisons? Could you comment on that, please, for the record?

**Hon. Steven Blaney:** Thank you for the question, Madam James.

Indeed, no, they have not materialized. Ms. Kelly can attest to the evidence. In fact, we are closing prisons—one in Quebec, one in Ontario. The amount of double bunking is as low as 20% in our facilities, and is expected to go down.

The fact is that we feel it's important to keep criminals behind bars. We are happy to see that the crime rate is still decreasing in this country, and we are moving forward with the agenda to make sure that those who commit violence and represent a threat to society are kept behind bars.

To the specifics of your question, I can refer to Ms. Kelly. But the apocalyptic projections that were made have not materialized. There is a steady pace of criminals behind bars, but one has to take into account the increase in the population.

Madam Kelly, would you like to add something?

• (1150)

**Ms. Anne Kelly (Senior Deputy Commissioner, Correctional Service of Canada):** Thank you for the question.

I think originally when the projections were done, the data we had at our disposal was about three to four years old. It was projecting growth in remand offenders. The following year we noticed that the growth wasn't actually materializing, so our researchers developed a forecasting tool, and now when we look at projected and actual number of offenders with that forecasting tool, we're within 48 inmates. So it's projecting very well.

Certainly the additional cells that are going to come online—2,752 by the end of March 2014—we believe will be able to absorb the capacity.

**Ms. Roxanne James:** Thank you.

Minister, can I ask you a question specifically about double bunking? Is double bunking a normal practice throughout the world in countries that we're compared to? Double bunking doesn't cause someone to be violent. They are in jail, in federal penitentiaries, because they have committed in most cases very heinous violent crimes. I just want your comments on the whole theory that double bunking is somehow responsible for violence in our jails.

**Hon. Steven Blaney:** I thank you for your question,

[*Translation*]

...the parliamentary secretary...

[*English*]

I'll answer in English. Double bunking is a normal practice in western countries. I think I can take the opportunity to thank the correctional services for their great work within our facilities, because they are making use of this in a rather clever way. Actually, Correctional Services Canada has done some studies that demonstrate that there is no link between violence and double bunking in our facility. Moreover, they are also making sure that the matching of inmates is appropriate. So this strategy is working.

As I've indicated, the numbers are low, but this is a means by which we manage the population within our facility. As you know, we have also increased our number of units over the years, but the fact of the matter remains that most of the inmates are in a single cell, although we feel that double bunking is a normal practice and that actually prisoners are not entitled to their own cells.

**Ms. Roxanne James:** Thank you.

In your opening remarks you talked about the Beyond the Border action plan, a shared entry-exit program, and about having proper identification before the traveller comes to Canada, so we can actually stop them at their takeoff country, as opposed to allowing those coming into Canada to be here and then having to be removed at some other point in time.

I thank you for sharing that with us, and also for bringing us the fact that since 2006 we've actually removed over 115,000 illegal immigrants who have come to Canada illegally and who should have been removed and had to be removed because they were probably asked to leave and they did not. So I thank you for bringing those statistics.

The next question has to do specifically with our border. I'll be quick. We've heard opposition and perhaps some media claim that our border is at risk because of cuts to CBSA. I'm just wondering how that's possible, because they are doing a fantastic job. They have removed 115,000 people. They secure our borders. Could you comment on that, please?

• (1155)

**Hon. Steven Blaney:** Absolutely. There is a lot to say about the Beyond the Border initiative. As I indicated, we have increased our number of border service officers by 26%. That's why we have been able to get those outstanding results and return those who enter our country illegally. We have to make sure that our immigration system, which is one of the most generous in the world, is working well.

I would like to go on, but Mr. Portelance can tell you a lot about what we're doing with the Beyond the Border initiative. One thing for sure is that we are committed to making our border safer. As the Auditor General acknowledged in his latest reports, a lot of progress has been made. We need to make more progress, and we will seek support from the members in order to continue to do so.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Minister.

If Mr. Portelance wishes to comment, of course, he can do it in another round of questioning. We are now past the time here.

We will now go to Mr. Garrison, please, for seven minutes.

**Mr. Randall Garrison (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, NDP):** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

I'd like to welcome the new minister to the public safety committee. I look forward to having the chance for more dialogue with the minister on a more regular basis perhaps than we had with the previous minister.

Obviously, public safety is a challenging portfolio, given its breadth, and I would like to thank all the officials who are with the minister today. It's a clear indication of the responsibilities that come under the minister. My sympathies are with the new minister; I think it's extra challenging given the record of the previous minister. My disappointment is that the supplemental estimates should have provided you with a chance to address some of these outstanding concerns.

My colleagues will have questions in a number of areas, but I want to start by asking about what has now become a crisis in our prison system, and this has been documented in the annual report for 2012-13 by the Correctional Investigator. In there, he makes reference to conditions in our prisons that are much like those of the late sixties and early seventies, which led to prison riots. I think this is a very serious concern.

There's a growing prison population, and despite members here today congratulating themselves on not reaching the worst predictions, we have a steady growth in the prison population. We now have the highest prison population we've had in our history at a time when crime is going down. The Correctional Investigator said very clearly that this growth is policy driven, not crime driven. It's a result of the decisions of the government to incarcerate more people, rather than to focus on rehabilitation.

The minister has had the recommendations in this annual report since June 28, so my disappointment in the supplemental estimates is that there's no response to the urgent concerns raised by the Correctional Investigator. He talks about the tensions caused by overcrowding and double bunking. I find it particularly misleading to talk about being entitled to a private room. Double bunking is placing two prisoners in a cell designed for one, and all the criminal justice literature around the world shows that this practice leads to an increase in violence and tension within prisons. If the minister actually has a study showing differently, I would invite him to table that study with this committee.

The Correctional Investigator, in particular, in his report focuses on the failures to meet the rehabilitation needs of aboriginal and visible minority offenders. Both of these are vastly overrepresented in prison custody, and he points to the lack of culturally appropriate rehabilitation programs for both aboriginal people and visible minorities.

I'm asking about these issues because the failures of the correctional system have a direct impact on public policy. If offenders leave the system without being rehabilitated, it will result in future victims of crime. My question very specifically is, why is there no response whatsoever in the supplemental estimates to the annual report of the Correctional Investigator?

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Steven Blaney:** Thank you very much, Mr. Garrison. That's a fairly detailed question that calls for a rather detailed response.

The correctional investigator did in fact issue a report that the people of Correctional Services are analyzing. They will consider his recommendations and issue directives in that regard. Please stay tuned for follow-up on the Correctional Services report.

You spoke about Canada's prison population, but I would like to point out that Canada's population has never been this high. There is a correlation between the population and the number of criminals. Canada's population is currently over 30 million, and our federal prisons currently house about 15,000 inmates. That's too many, but if someone has committed serious and violent crimes or is a threat to society, it is important to not release them too soon and to prevent them from committing other offences. Those people need to be behind bars.

Mr. Garrison, I live in the Lévis—Bellechasse riding. Someone from the municipality of Armagh, which is in that riding, was attacked by a repeat offender. The National Parole Board report stated that the individual was still a threat to society, yet he was released. I think Canadians are tired of having dangerous criminals on the streets endangering people's lives. That's what my predecessor, Vic Toews, was committed to and he was quite successful. I am very proud of the work he and his predecessors did. I am also very proud of the agenda that our government has put forward to make our streets safer.

With respect to correctional services, I've had the opportunity to visit minimum, medium and maximum-security detention centres. In all cases, I got an idea of all the measures implemented so that inmates, particularly aboriginals, had access to a rehabilitation program that took their profile into consideration.

It's obvious that the aboriginal inmate population has increased. That's why Correctional Services has made a considerable effort to deal with that segment of the population in our institutions. There are areas that take into account their aboriginal practices and beliefs. We also use specialized staff. A number of measures have been taken. As you know, Canada is a leader in rehabilitation, especially so that inmates can gain the aptitudes and skills so that once they are released, they have the competencies the labour market is looking for.

Your question is fairly broad. To come back to the last point you raised, I'd like to point out that fewer than 20% of inmates double-bunk in our prisons, which is very low. It's important to remember that being in prison isn't a luxury. The New Democrats are against abolishing old age security benefits for inmates, but there comes a time when we have to stop maintaining an unbalanced system. I hope that we can count on your support to find a balance between the victims and inmates when it comes to the measures we are going to put forward.

• (1200)

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr. Garrison.

We'll now go to Mr. Norlock for seven minutes.

**Mr. Rick Norlock (Northumberland—Quinte West, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

And through you to the minister and officials, thank you for attending today.

I have a couple of quick questions to do with two somewhat different topics.

For the first one, Minister, I wonder if you could give your thoughts on an accusation that's been around with regard to racism in the ranks of our correctional officers.

After you finish that, perhaps you could talk about mandatory minimum penalties that this government put in place to protect children and Canadians from the most serious offenders. Could you share your thoughts on the Liberal leader's recent statements regarding the desire to repeal these.

**Hon. Steven Blaney:** I will begin by saying that as a society, we need to set the bar. We need to say that this is unacceptable, that adults attacking children, attacking them sexually, is not acceptable in Canada.

That's why we need to give indication as a society to the judge who will be put in front of those persons. That's why we have some mandatory minimum sentences. They are actually very low in number. Of all our sentences, less than 10% are mandatory minimum sentences. They are established for crimes that society feels are totally unacceptable and where society wants to send a signal that we don't like these heinous, reprehensible acts. We will pursue and punish those who commit them.

That's why, in their wisdom, parliamentarians are establishing mandatory minimum sentences. It is not a matter of party. It is not a matter of ideology. It is a matter of good common sense. This is what mandatory minimum sentences are all about. That's why there are some mandatory minimum sentences for drug traffickers around schools, and sexual predators.

Can you just refresh my memory on your second question?

• (1205)

**Mr. Rick Norlock:** It has to do with the accusation on the part of our correctional officers, some of whom I know very well, that there is racism within our correctional institutions, and particularly amongst our correctional officers.

**Hon. Steven Blaney:** I think this is an assault to our front-line correctional services officers, who work in a very demanding environment.

I would like Ms. Kelly to perhaps comment on what is accomplished by our correctional services to tackle the challenges that come from inmates from all over the board.

**Ms. Anne Kelly:** Certainly with our ethnocultural offenders, first of all, we do offer programs of cross-cultural training to our staff. In terms of the offenders in our institutions, we have what we call

national ethnocultural advisory committees, as well as regional ethnocultural advisory committees.

Those committees actually serve as liaison between our institutions and the ethnocultural communities. The national committee is actually chaired by the commissioner. He meets with them a few times a year. At the regional level, those committees are chaired by the regional deputy commissioner.

We also offer, for ethnocultural offenders, social programs and activities to commemorate events. Actually, I would say, in those circumstances offenders become sensitized to other offenders' cultures, as do the staff.

If there's any allegation of inappropriate conduct, that is taken seriously. In those cases, we would do an investigation and then impose appropriate sanctions if required.

**Mr. Rick Norlock:** Thank you very much.

Minister, a previous question by my friend across the way had to do with some programming. In my riding of Northumberland—Quinte West, we have one of Canada's largest federal penitentiaries, Warkworth Institution. Many times I've done tours there.

I know there was a special building constructed specifically for first nations, for our aboriginal communities, to learn to be proud of their culture, to learn that how you get over some of the issues surrounding...it is by instilling, going back to, the proud heritage they have, and teaching them skills.

You'll have to forgive me, Ms. Kelly, because I forget the name of the program specifically.

As well, when I attended Frontenac Institution about two years ago, we learned how inmates were learning how to operate a laundry facility, let's say, within the institution, actually servicing more than one institution. They learned certain skills that they were able to transfer over to hotel management and hospitals, etc.

In addition to that, they were building portable offices—

**The Chair:** We're running out of time, and I've been advised the minister does have to go. He has another appointment, so we're going to have to cut it off there.

Minister, thank you very kindly for coming in today. I recognize you have another appointment, regrettably, so we're going to have to be able to finish with the guests here.

We'll suspend now for one minute.

**Hon. Steven Blaney:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'm looking forward to meeting you again when we won't be interrupted by a vote.

Thank you very much.

• (1205)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Pause) \_\_\_\_\_

• (1210)

**The Chair:** We will now resume the opportunity for questions from our floor.

We'll go back to Mr. Norlock. You have one minute left.

**Mr. Rick Norlock:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I wonder if Ms. Kelly can do two things: first, comment on the aboriginal programming, as well as the occupational programming that I referred to, in our prison system; second, on inmate projections and actualities, I understand that you may have a chart and a graph that shows the differences.

Could you produce that for the committee, through the clerk? I'd appreciate that very much.

**The Chair:** Quickly, Ms. Kelly.

**Ms. Anne Kelly:** On aboriginal programming specifically, we offer a number of programs and interventions. One that we're quite proud of is the Pathways initiative, and maybe that's what you were referring to. Our Pathways initiatives have actually increased from 7 to 25. This is a traditional environment, and for aboriginal offenders who choose to follow their healing path, they can be placed in those Pathways. In terms of other types of programs, we have specific programs for aboriginals that target substance abuse, violence prevention, and family violence.

**The Chair:** Thank you. I'm sorry, we're out of time on this, but thank you very much.

We will now go to Mr. Bélanger for seven minutes.

[Translation]

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger (Ottawa—Vanier, Lib.):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Guimont, ladies and gentlemen, I'm disappointed that the minister left the meeting after half an hour, but there it is.

The Correctional Service of Canada accommodation plan 2013-18 indicates about \$1 billion in assessed needs, following the closure of Kingston Penitentiary, Leclerc Institution and the Ontario Regional Treatment Centre. It was assessed that the buildings that were in poor or critical condition and needed to be repaired constituted \$1 billion of the total value of the existing facilities.

Could you please tell us how you intend to address this problem?

**Ms. Anne Kelly:** Thank you for your question.

We have obtained some investments enabling us to build new units, which will give us an additional 2,752 cells—

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** I'm talking about existing facilities, the ones in poor or critical condition.

Do you intend to demolish them?

**Ms. Anne Kelly:** No.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** How are you going to repair them?

**Ms. Anne Kelly:** I don't have that information here today. I would have to send you that information.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Could you please send it to the clerk?

**Ms. Anne Kelly:** Okay.

[English]

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Back to double bunking for a minute.

According to the Correctional Service Canada's 2011-12 report on plans and priorities, and I'm going to quote two passages, one on

page 12, "double-bunking at these levels...." These levels are now 3,000, roughly; if the minister said 15,000, then 20% is 3,000.

Double-bunking at these levels increases the risk to safety and security in institutions because of pressures that inevitably arise in crowded conditions combined with the tensions that exist among some inmate groups.

The other one is on page 19:

...in the context of anticipated increases in the offender population and the consequent rise in double bunking, CSC will be challenged to meet its targets with regard to the reduction of assaults and violent incidents in institutions.

How do you respond to that, given what we've heard already this morning? These are from your own department.

• (1215)

**Ms. Anne Kelly:** Again, in terms of our population management approach, it's a multifaceted approach.

The first thing we do is ensure that all available cells are used. We have national population management strategy committees at both the national and the regional levels. This is something that we follow closely. We do make use of double bunking, and currently it's at the 20% level; however, with the building of the new units, which is going to give us 2,752 additional cells, we believe we'll be able to manage the capacity we have until at least 2018. The other thing we can do is make use of inter-regional transfers to manage our population.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Am I hearing you say that the level of double bunking will essentially be maintained?

**Ms. Anne Kelly:** No, actually with the addition of the new cells, with most of them online by the end of March 2014, we expect to return to a level of double bunking of around 8%.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** When?

**Ms. Anne Kelly:** This is once all of the units have come online.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Thank you.

Mr. Paulson, can you give me a sense of the costs related to the new headquarters of the RCMP? What are we up to now?

**Commissioner Bob Paulson (Commissioner of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Royal Canadian Mounted Police):** No, I can't.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Can you supply that information to the committee?

**Commr Bob Paulson:** Well, I'd have to go looking for it, so I don't think I can.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** I understand you don't have them with you, but presumably someone has that.

**Commr Bob Paulson:** Just maybe help me understand your question here.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** I gather the headquarters are moving to the old JDS Uniphase facilities.

**Commr Bob Paulson:** It's done. It's been done for years.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** What are the costs associated with that?

**Commr Bob Paulson:** We've been at JDS Uniphase for about two or three years. So you're looking for the cost of moving out there?

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** And whatever had to be done to the facilities as well....



Is it possible to have that information?

**Commr Bob Paulson:** I suppose so, but I think it's a fairly public record there, and it's old news.

I'm going to have to go and dig that up somewhere.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Thank you.

**Commr Bob Paulson:** But I don't know that I'm undertaking to do that. Am I undertaking to do that?

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** I'm asking you.

**Commr Bob Paulson:** I'll do what I can.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Thank you.

[Translation]

The supplementary estimates indicate a transfer of \$500,000 from the Correctional Service of Canada to certain entities to clean up federally contaminated sites. What is the reason for that transfer? Is it because there are contaminated sites near correctional facilities?

**Ms. Anne Kelly:** We had received funds, but there was a surplus. We had to transfer it to Fisheries and Oceans Canada and to Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Why?

**Ms. Anne Kelly:** I will have to provide an answer to that later.

[English]

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**The Chair:** You still have a minute, if you'd like, Mr. Bélanger.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** No.

**The Chair:** Okay, then, we will go to Madame Doré Lefebvre, *s'il vous plait*, for five minutes.

[Translation]

**Ms. Rosane Doré Lefebvre (Alfred-Pellan, NDP):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would like to thank the witnesses for being here today. It is extremely important to hear your comments on the supplementary estimates.

My first few questions are for Mr. Guimont or anyone who can answer them.

In our last few meetings, I probably spoke to you about the fight against street gangs and the Police Officers Recruitment Fund, which the government decided not to renew. This program funded joint regional squads, particularly in Quebec, to deal with street gangs. It worked very well but, unfortunately, their funding was cut. In Quebec, police officers decided to continue to use these joint squads because there were very effective in dismantling street gang networks.

Is there a solution to this lack of funding so that we can fight the increasing presence of street gangs? Do you intend to fund the implementation of a prevention program to deal with street gangs?

•(1220)

**Mr. François Guimont (Deputy Minister, Department of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness):** As I mentioned previously, the program worked very well. The \$400 million was

allocated to the provinces and territories based on their population. They were able to hire police officers. It was a very good program.

We think the program achieved its objectives: police officers were hired, they were incorporated into the police forces and, now, they are working. That is why we ended the program. It wasn't an ongoing program, but a temporary one.

Now I'll get to your more specific question.

Some elements of the department's programming deal with crime prevention. We have the National Crime Prevention Centre. It's at headquarters, but it also has ramifications in the regions. We allocate funds, a program of about \$40 million, for various initiatives in the regions that are designated as being a priority, so that the initiatives have a positive impact on the provinces and territories where those programs are implemented. The programs are also variable. Obviously, the programs can change depending on the priorities determined by the federal and provincial governments.

We also have the Kanishka project, and \$10 million has been invested in it. The project's objective is to understand the causes of criminal behaviour. Some of those elements are related to components of criminal behaviour in youth. So there is a grant program that supports activities, educational or otherwise, across the country.

Finally, we have a cross-cultural round table made up of Canadians of various ethnic backgrounds. It is very important and has been around since 2006. I'd like to stress this activity. I am often at that table—

**Ms. Rosane Doré Lefebvre:** I'm sorry, Mr. Guimont, but I don't have a lot of time to cover all that. I don't want to be disrespectful, but we already know that these programs exist. Thank you for answering the question.

My last question is for Mrs. Kelly and has to do with rehabilitation programs.

Traditionally, the Correctional Service of Canada has allocated 5% of its budget to inmate rehabilitation programs, which are extremely important. These programs are recognized by the staff, management and various experts in the field.

Funding for these programs is not currently 5% of the Correctional Service of Canada's budget, but is about 2.5% or 2.7%, which is one of the lowest rates.

What are your thoughts on that? Do you think funding should be brought back up to 5% of the budget? Are we moving toward an increase in the percentage of the budget allocated for inmate rehabilitation programs?

**Ms. Anne Kelly:** I don't have the percentages here with me, but I can say that investments have been made in rehabilitation programs. We believe in this kind of program. Our programs are recognized around the world. When we assess inmates at intake, we direct them toward programs.

We still depend a lot on our programs. Investments have been made more recently in the programs. We continue to evaluate them.

• (1225)

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Weston, please.

**Mr. Rodney Weston (Saint John, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Paulson, my question is for you. I'm from Saint John, New Brunswick. Last weekend there was a highly publicized issue with a member of the RCMP. It generated a lot of discussion and a lot of media attention in the provincial newspaper on Friday and Saturday of last week. I wonder if you would care to elaborate a little more on that issue, as I'm sure people would like to hear a little more detail surrounding that issue of the member smoking medicinal marijuana and the RCMP's actions with respect to that individual member.

**Commr Bob Paulson:** Thank you.

It is a particularly difficult and delicate situation with respect to the member you're referring to, who has been under the care of doctors and has been trying to get better, having encountered some occupational stress injuries during the course of his duties.

It was very awkward and disappointing to see how, despite extensive efforts by our commanders in New Brunswick and other staff, we were unable to dissuade him from going to the media. I was pretty disappointed, frankly, to see that story. I'm still trying to figure out what the story was, and I was sad for the member. I think his colleagues were sad for him. It was all very embarrassing, I think, not just for the force, but for Canadians.

I suppose it did raise some issues with respect to managing members or employees of organizations, particularly those engaged in public safety, who are prescribed medical marijuana, and the propriety of that in the first instance, and then the issue as to whether or not there needs to be some accommodation of providing spaces at work, and so on.

Let me just say that while he was taking his medication, this officer was never in duties that would have been remotely understood to have been police-related. In fact, he is fully off duty right now. We're working with him to try to help him get better. We had to take some decisive actions to make sure this situation wasn't exploited by people who wanted to exploit this poor member.

I feel very embarrassed for the member, and hopefully we can help him along.

**Mr. Rodney Weston:** I appreciate your comments, Commissioner, especially since you used the word "confused", because there is a lot of confusion publicly about the whole situation. I spoke to people from around my area who look at it from different sides. Some were supportive of the actions of the RCMP, and some were confused by the actions of the RCMP, just from the perspective that it was medicinal marijuana that was part of the story.

Do you have a policy with respect to members' usage of medicinal marijuana?

**Commr Bob Paulson:** We have a policy with respect to the usage of mind-altering medications and so on, which is to say that members won't be put into duty-related activities. We also have the responsibility to engage our health services people with the

member's doctor to make sure they understand the full range of strategies that can be brought to bear on this member's condition.

We also do have policies with respect to talking to the media while representing themselves as members of the force on force-related matters, and we have policies with respect to wearing of uniforms.

So all those things are being applied now. The member in question was spoken to ahead of this incident, was asked not to do what he had done, but...he's not in a good place. Consequently, it got away on a bunch of people, and it gained an enormous public aspect that really didn't do the member any service.

**Mr. Rodney Weston:** You referenced the member as not being in a good place. I'm assuming you have support services available.

• (1230)

**Commr Bob Paulson:** We do have support services. Like everyone, we are experiencing a demand on our mental health care for our members. As many of you know, policing is a particularly demanding and stressful profession, as are most of the professions that are represented here. Members from time to time encounter difficulty and need our support.

Not only do we have a very robust support mechanism for them, but we're building, recognizing that this is growing a lot on us.

**The Chair:** Fine. Thank you, Mr. Paulson.

Ms. Sims, please, for five minutes.

**Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims (Newton—North Delta, NDP):** Thank you very much.

It's a pleasure to be at this committee. This is my first time appearing here, so I have a couple of questions, and bear with me, please.

We hear a lot about the security of our borders and how we need to be doing more, and yet the very government that talks about border security all the time announced major cuts, I would say, in its 2012 budget—\$143 million by 2015 to CBSA and \$195.2 million by 2015 to the RCMP.

We know from the Customs and Immigration Union that 325 jobs on the front line of border crossings across the country will be cut. The intelligence branch of the CBSA has been hard hit, losing 100 positions, and 19 sniffer dog units—considering we've just been talking about marijuana—are being slashed due to the budget reductions.

What kind of an impact is this actually going to have on our border security? We're not talking just theoretical. We're talking about actual bodies who are needed at the borders who are not going to be there.

**Mr. Luc Portelance (President, Canada Border Services Agency):** First, I welcome the opportunity to clarify the record in terms of the impact on the border.

In general terms, the numbers you've quoted are accurate. The CBSA, like all other departments, contributed to the effort in fighting the government deficit, so we contributed \$143 million. That number is certainly accurate.

The efforts the CBSA made were to protect the integrity of managing the border. I can assure you, and I am highly confident, that we've achieved that in terms of the manner in which we undertook those cuts. For instance, about half of those cuts—close to \$70 million—were achieved by the streamlining of internal services. This is mostly headquarters support functions and the associated responsibilities.

We also streamlined a lot of the programs. We found efficiencies in programs.

Where we didn't cut was what we call the front line, so for the services we provide in the airports and at the land border, for instance, we did not conduct any reductions in staff.

**Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims:** Thank you.

Were the 100 intelligence branch job losses just administrative? Even if they were administrative, it's my understanding that they would still have been supporting front-line intelligence officers in order to do their job.

As well, 19 sniffer dogs seems to be a very high number.

But I want to move on to a different question now, if I may. I heard earlier some very grandiose comments about how generous our immigration system is, and it took everything in me to sit here and not scream. I have to put it on record that we've become a country that actually turns down mothers, fathers, wives, sons, brothers, and sisters from even coming to funerals, never mind being generous with our immigration policies.

But the question I have—

**The Chair:** A point of order, Ms. James.

**Ms. Roxanne James:** Actually, I sat with Ms. Sims on a prior immigration committee.

Canada allows 250,000 immigrants into Canada every year. We have the most fair immigration system in the world.

**Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims:** This is debate, Chair.

**The Chair:** Okay, we are getting into debate, but the point of order—

• (1235)

**Ms. Roxanne James:** Ms. Sims is talking about specific cases.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

The chair recognizes the point of order, but the chair also recognizes the fact that we should keep the question germane to the topic of public safety here, and the chair would most certainly appreciate that.

**Ms. Jinny Jogindera Sims:** Thank you, Chair.

The only reason I was forced to respond—and I won't continue—is that a comment was made and I couldn't allow it to just sit there.

The question I have now actually goes right into the makeup of our population. We've seen a 25% growth in our prison population, and yet our Canadian population has not grown at that same rate.

But specifically I want to talk about our aboriginal population. The aboriginal population in prisons is ten times more than the

national average; 33.6% of all women prisoners right across the board are aboriginal women. And among black males we've seen an increase of 80% in prisons.

What is your response to that? And please be quick.

**Ms. Anne Kelly:** Yes, there has been an increase, and that's why, certainly, it's a priority for us to manage aboriginal offenders and to reduce the overrepresentation.

In Correctional Service of Canada we do quite a bit, actually. We do have some healing lodges where aboriginal offenders can be incarcerated. As I said before, we have actually increased the number of Pathways initiatives for aboriginal offenders to 25. Actually, those who participate in those pathways have a greater chance of moving down to lower security levels.

**The Chair:** Thank you. We're over the time right now, but thank you very kindly.

Now, Mr. Norlock, go ahead, please.

**Mr. Rick Norlock:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

The question is for Mr. Portelance.

Because we're dealing with supplementary estimates and the cost of running government, I'm given to understand that after review of some access to information documents that are highly troubling, they appear to indicate that on January 7, 2013, the director of headquarters accommodation was doing translation services for the Ottawa—Vanier riding association of the Liberal Party.

Is it policy and acceptable for public servants and CBSA to do partisan activity at work, and can you tell us what steps have been taken to discipline this individual?

**Mr. Luc Portelance:** I'm intimately aware of the case the member is referring to. There are two components to that particular issue. One of them actually falls under the responsibility of the Public Service Commission, and that has to do with the partisan activities of public servants.

From the CBSA perspective, the responsibility we had was to determine whether or not the employee was using our facilities and our tools for purposes that were inconsistent with their responsibilities. We launched an internal investigation and have concluded that investigation. Discipline has already been attributed with respect to that individual.

As for the other matter, Mr. Chair, again, that is under the responsibility of the Public Service Commission. They are seized with the matter. It would be up to them to comment on their current investigation.

**Mr. Rick Norlock:** Thank you very much, sir.

Could you explain the importance of moving forward with the collection and sharing of exit and entry information between Canada and the United States, particularly through the Beyond the Border initiative?

**Mr. Luc Portelance:** I really do appreciate the opportunity to speak to this rather important issue.

The whole concept of managing exit information in Canada is really the cornerstone of the modernization of managing Canada's border. Historically, Canada has not collected information on individuals leaving the country, whether they be Canadians or non-Canadians. As such, it has been impossible to reconcile the entries into and the exits out of Canada.

Canada and the United States are two of the few remaining countries that don't do this. Anyone who has travelled in Europe recently will know that upon leaving Europe you will be encountering an individual who will ask you for your passport information and so on.

This is a fairly significant portion of the Beyond the Border action plan. Last June—on June 30, to be precise—we undertook to work with the U.S. We began the project of exchanging information on non-Canadians and non-U.S. citizens at the land border. We are currently working on the next steps. They are articulated clearly in the Beyond the Border action plan, which targets full implementation by June 30, 2014.

Again, this is a fairly significant area in terms of allowing us to reconcile entry and exit and to effectively manage Canada's border.

• (1240)

**Mr. Rick Norlock:** Thank you.

I have one more question in that same realm. Can you explain the importance of the interactive advance passenger information initiative and how it will help prevent criminals from entering Canada by providing board/no board direction to incoming international flights?

**Mr. Luc Portelance:** This is another rather important element of the Beyond the Border action plan. If I may, I will just illustrate what happens today to compare to what we will have in the future. Today, when you board an aircraft from Europe, let's say, the CBSA gets the information on passenger manifests after the aircraft has left Europe. That provides us time and an opportunity, certainly, to determine whether there are any high-risk travellers on that flight and to take action when individuals arrive on Canadian soil.

The key words here are that it occurs “when individuals arrive on Canadian soil”. The benefit of interactive passenger information going forward will be that we will acquire that information from airlines 72 hours before the aircraft leaves their port of departure. We will actually have a few opportunities to vet that information to determine whether there are any high-risk individuals on those flights. Most importantly, it will provide the CBSA, with partner agencies, the opportunity to direct airlines to not board an individual, and—

**The Chair:** That's fine. Thank you very much. I'm sorry. We're out of time.

**Mr. Luc Portelance:** No problem.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Portelance.

We will now go back to Mr. Garrison, please.

You have five minutes.

**Mr. Randall Garrison:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

I wish we had more time to talk about the issue of racism, which was raised in the Correctional Investigator's report, but I want to make it clear that no one, not the Correctional Investigator or anyone on this side, is accusing our correction officers of being racist. What we're talking about is a failure of the system to respond to the correctional needs of aboriginal people and visible minorities within the system so they can return to society as contributing members.

I want to return to another matter that the Correctional Investigator calls “a dramatic reversal in terms of principles and standards”. He's talking about double bunking here, as it interferes with relocation and also creates unsafe work environments for corrections officers.

The new policy in corrections removes two principles. Our policy used to say that “single occupancy accommodation is the most desirable and correctionally appropriate method of housing offenders.” The second quote is that “double bunking is inappropriate as a permanent accommodation measure within the context of corrections.”

What I'm asking about is that now that we're at the highest levels of double bunking we've ever seen—26% on the Prairies—what is the correctional justification for double bunking? Not “what's the need to accommodate”; we know there's growth in population and there's a need to accommodate people. But what is the correctional justification for this? Why have these principles, which were long-standing principles of our corrections system, been removed?

**Ms. Anne Kelly:** In terms of double bunking, obviously we still strive for single occupancy. That's not always possible. Again, I'll go back to what I said before, that we have an approach to this. The first thing we do... Again, it's through national population management committees and regional population management committees that we make use of every single cell across the country, where we can. We've extended shared accommodation, which is a cell built for two. We also make use of double bunking. It's true, our current levels are at 20%. I should mention that before inmates can be double bunked, there is an assessment tool that needs to be completed.

The other thing is, with the new cells coming online, the majority of which will be by the end of March 2014, we expect to have our double-bunking levels return to approximately 8%.

Definitely, in terms of double bunking, we also have our correctional officers do what I would say is a great job. We certainly monitor the movement in our institutions to ensure that violent incidents do not take place.

• (1245)

**Mr. Randall Garrison:** You refer to the double-bunking assessment process. Your own audit shows that the double-bunking assessments were done in less than half the cases when people were double bunked. This is a CSC audit. Fifty percent of the time you're not doing those assessments that you say you're relying on. Isn't this a significant contributor to things such as assault within the prison system?

**Ms. Anne Kelly:** Yes, there was an audit, but we've taken steps to ensure that those assessments are indeed completed.

**Mr. Randall Garrison:** I have one last quick question. Has Corrections Canada been requested to provide a report on the implementation of the new directive on treatment of prisoners with mental health issues? Have you provided the minister with a report on the success of the implementation of that directive, or has that even been requested?

**Ms. Anne Kelly:** I don't know the answer to that.

**Mr. Randall Garrison:** Okay. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

We have another committee coming in here. We have votes that we will be participating in here today. We also have instructions to the clerk from members of our committee.

We will suspend now and thank our witnesses very kindly for coming in today. Please come back and see us again.

**Mr. Randall Garrison:** A point of order, Mr. Chair.

We're scheduled to sit until—

**The Chair:** That's fine, but we have votes that have to be done on this issue today, sir. That is why the chair is.... We have to get through the votes.

**Mr. Randall Garrison:** I didn't understand. You're moving directly to the votes.

**The Chair:** We proceed directly to the votes.

• (1245) \_\_\_\_\_ (Pause) \_\_\_\_\_

• (1250)

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, colleagues. I appreciate your cooperation today.

We will now be voting on the supplementary estimates (B), and there are nine sections. We will have to do them one at a time; they cannot be done en masse.

The committee should also be notified that we can adopt them—which is hopefully where we are going with this—but the committee can also reduce or negative each one, and of course you cannot increase the amount before you here today.

We will start.

PUBLIC SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Department

Vote 5b—The grants listed in the Estimates and contributions.....\$714,000,000

Canada Border Services Agency

Vote 10b—Operating expenditures.....\$35,718,818

Vote 15b—Capital expenditures.....\$40,937,047

Canadian Security Intelligence Service

Vote 20b—Program expenditures.....\$5,178,867

Correctional Service of Canada

Vote 25b—Operating expenditures.....\$5,592,264

Royal Canadian Mounted Police

Vote 45b—Operating expenditures.....\$172,950

Vote 50b—Capital expenditures.....\$157,575

Vote 55b—The grants listed in the Estimates and contributions.....\$5,833,485

Royal Canadian Mounted Police Public Complaints Commission

Vote 65b—Program expenditures.....\$4,289,937

(Votes 5b, 10b, 15b, 20b, 25b, 45b, 50b, 55b, and 65b agreed to on division)

**The Chair:** Shall I report the supplementary estimates (B) 2013-14 to the House?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** On division.

**The Chair:** We'll have a recorded vote.

[See *Minutes of Proceedings*]

**The Chair:** Colleagues, just before we break, we also had requests for information from Mr. Bélanger to Ms. Kelly and also to Mr. Paulson. The first one, of course, was on the plans in the budget for repairing the existing prisons. The second one is for the past cost of the RCMP move from Mr. Paulson.

Yes, Ms. James.

**Ms. Roxanne James:** Thank you.

I believe a third item was to be submitted. Mr. Norlock was speaking with Ms. Kelly at the end and was talking about some sort of graph or report that showed the original estimates versus the actual numbers of the increase in the prison population, I believe. She agreed to provide it.

**The Chair:** I'll ask the clerk to check the blues. I'm assuming we're into a reasonable cost allowance on something like this. We don't need to spend half a million dollars on a request, I would hope. However, if the committee members wish to go down that road, I am at your discretion.

Are we comfortable with the clerk following through with this matter from the blues and reporting back to this committee with the information?

We're all comfortable. Is there any further business today?

This meeting is adjourned.





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